

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A computer implemented method for operating a quality plan in a product development organization comprising a plurality of members and having quality objectives for product development projects, the method analyzing a quality metrics report, and comprising the steps of:

defining a set of quality processes adapted to quality objectives required by an organization, wherein the set of quality processes includes:

a tracking process for identifying an issue in the product development projects, the tracking process being an internal project management tracking process that reports a status of current risks according to a priority of a risk issue and a target date for resolution of the risk issue;

a meeting set-up and reporting process for preparing and conducting meetings among a plurality of members of the organization;

a daily headlights reporting process for providing communications among members of the organization, wherein the daily headlights reporting process includes a headlight report being generated by a team leader, the headlight report including achievements of a day, changes to a project plan, assistance needed for a project, and potential catastrophes associated with the project, and wherein a quality management office consolidates the headlight reports daily into a single executive report, and wherein issue records are created daily from the consolidated headlight reports to initiate corrective actions to the project, and wherein the executive reports are consolidated weekly into a summary report;

a documentation process for reviewing and accepting documents generated by the product development projects;

an inspection process for determining deliverables generated by the product development projects to be reworked; and

a metrics process for producing metrics for the data relative to the product development projects;

defining a set of computer implemented quality tools to collect data relative to product development projects, said quality tools comprising at least one database to store said collected data;

for each quality process, aggregating a set of the stored data to generate a respective quality report;

analyzing each quality report to detect problems in the product development projects; and

using results of the analyzing step to initiate actions to resolve the problems detected, thereby improving quality of the product development projects, and wherein the daily headlights reporting process further comprises the steps of:

generating headlight reports having headlights data;

consolidating at a first predetermined frequency the headlights reports into a single executive report to be distributed to an executive distribution list;

recording issue items in an issue memory area based on data of the executive report; and

generating at a second predetermined frequency a headlight summary based on the executive reports.

2. (cancelled)

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising a survey process to evaluate a contribution of a member of the organization to a quality plan, wherein the evaluation of the contribution of the member is based on a difficulty of a software project, and wherein the difficulty of the software project is based on a software timing, whether pre-existing documentation exists for the project, a scope of use of software being developed by the software project, a complexity of the software, and a number of interfaces being used by the software.

4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the tracking process further comprises the steps of:

recording the identified issue within an issue storing area of the at least one database;

assigning to the issue priority, a resolution target date, and an organization member responsible; and

communicating to members of the organization actions taken to resolve the issue item.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the recorded issue comprises a field for indicating an open date, an issue identifier, a description of the issue, and an open status.

6. (original) The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of updating the open status field to a close status for a resolved issue in the at least one database.
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the meeting set-up and reporting process further comprises the steps of:  
creating a meeting record in a meeting storing area of the at least one database, the meeting record comprising a meeting date, a meeting place, a meeting attendee, and a meeting agenda;  
sending an invitation to the meeting attendee; and sending a meeting report after completion of the meeting to receivers.
8. (original) The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of storing the meeting report in a reports storing area of the at least one database.
9. (cancelled)
10. (original) The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of storing the executive report and the headlight summary in a reports memory area of the at least one database.
11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the documentation process further comprises the steps of:  
classifying a document and assigning a document review workflow to the document according to whether an originator of the document is a member of the organization; and  
creating a document record in a document memory area of the at least one database.
12. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the document is a technical document associated with a software product.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the inspection process further comprises the step of:

creating an inspection record in an inspection memory area of the at least one database, the inspection record comprising an open date, an inspection record identifier, a priority, a description of a deliverable, and a target date to complete the inspection process.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the metrics process further comprises the step of:

recording the quality metrics report in a metrics memory area of the at least one database.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the metrics further comprise product metrics.

16. (cancelled)

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the using results step further comprises the step of creating at least one quality action record in a quality actions memory area of the at least one database, the at least one quality action record comprising;

an open date,

a quality action identifier,

a priority,

a description of a quality, action, and

a target date to operate the quality action.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining a cause of a defect in a software being created by the product development organization, wherein the determining step is performed by determining if one or more events occurred, the one or more events being from a group of events that includes a miscommunication between members of a software development team, a software transcription error, and inadequate training of the members of the software development team.